Leicester, Mass.

August 31/68.

Dear friend Webb;

Your pleasant, cheery letter to Ade. arrived on Saturday, & was read to us by her at the dinner-table. We rejoice at every report of your convalescence; we could wish it more rapid, but "Slow & Sure" may be best in the long run. It is most satisfactory to be assured that there is no injury to the spinal column. We shall await further reports with very deep interest. Do not feel obliged to make them long, for your correspondence must now make heavy demands on your time & strength, even when all that is done by your friendly amanuensis is considered. How fine you must have been to hear from your daughter, now at your Antipodes, - & such favorable accts; - How pleasant to have Deborah near you for a time, & in a friend's private house. The hardness & churlishness of the Steamboat officers has, I rejoice to know, been most happily relieved by the hospitable, brotherly, & Christian attentions of Detroit.

I had a note from Mary Ethel today. She is with Mrs. Pillsbury at Concord N.H., having had

a most kind & friendly reception from herself & daughter. She does not speak of P.P., and I presume he is away from home, Mrs. May and I now propose to join her in Concord on Thursday next (Sept. 3d), and take a little excursion with her on Lake Winnipiseogee and, (if M. E. can bear it,) to the Franconia Notch, & that part of the White Mountains. All which, however, will yield to any call which you may send me, to come to you. I have to go to Boston on Wednesday to confer with a Committee of the Freedmen's Aid Socy, N. Engl'd Branch; & shall go thence direct to Concord N.H. I shall leave directions here to have any word from you forwarded to me.

My wife, who has been absent nearly a fortnight, returned home on Sat. evening, improved in health by the visits she has been paying among friends upon & near the Seashore. Joseph May, (the clerical son of my good Cousin S. J. M.) came with her, & preached to us yesterday, in our plain little Church, a very excellent discourse. He has lately been "settled" in the old (& quite "conservative", in the bad sense) town of Newburyport — Garrison's birthplace & Caleb

Cushing's;— John G. Whittier living in the adjoining town of Amesbury. S. J. May is at home again, for the present, in Syracuse, very sorry, I am sure, to be losing the visit he had expected to have from you during the month now so nigh its end.

You would have enjoyed Ade's 2 dramatic performances, I am quite certain,— I think you wd. have highly enjoyed them. They were very prettily & tastefully set before the Leicester public (of some 300 souls - Counting all who had come from Worcester, Boston, Dorchester, & other places) — the pieces were acted with spirit &, in several of the cases, with much ability. I wish you had been here — a wish to which I gave vocal expression at the aforesaid reading of your letter, and it was heartily echoed. Ade knows you wd. have been a highly appreciative listener, & that the humor, some of which was a little too recondite for the bulk of the hearers, would, none of it, have been lost upon you. She will like to tell you about it, when you get here. Bessie is much gratified that you remember the fact that

you were to have seen her that day of our ride thro' Dorchester, &c., & that you still regret the want of time which prevented its being carried into effect.

My Mother is recovering finely from the injury, so like yours in kind tho' less in degree, (but at past 80, likely to have proved a most serious thing to her) which happened to her July 27th — nearly at the same time with yours. She now walks about the house anywhere, up & down stairs, without any cane or support; & has several time been out in a carriage, — once to Brookline, 4 miles — & returned in the forenoon.

And now, not to weary you, who I wd. only fain beguile a little of your convalescent time, — I will stop, & am

Affectionately Yrs

Sam'l. May Jr.

MS:B.1.6 v.10, p.61